DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Geographic News Bulletin

This bulletin is issued weekly by the Department of the Interior. The information in it is obtained from the NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY, Washington, D. C.

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WINDMILLS AT EREGLI, ON THE EUROPEAN COAST OF THE MARMORA

Eregli was founded by colonists from Samos in 599 B. C. Windmills are supposed to have originated in this part of the world. They are still to be seen on many a headland and hilltop of the Marmora and the Aegean.

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Nome: A City That Hibernates

NOME, Alaska, in recent years has been a city that dwindles in winter to a population of but a few hundred, and spring has brought a lessening return of residents. Thus this remote mining camp, after a meteoric career and growth into a city, gradually is resuming the status of a town.

Situated on the bleak north coast of the icy, storm-swept Bering Sea, close to the Arctic Circle, Nome is frozen in and snowed in for about seven months of the year. Its chief industry, placer gold mining, depends upon the use of running water, therefore the activities must stop when the water congeals. Rather than spend the long winter in the extreme cold, waiting for the return of mild weather, a large part of the population of Nome has always returned to the States in the fall, making the journey back to the north in June, when navigation opens.

A Beach of Golden Sands

The over-night creature of an unusual gold discovery, the town grew up on a site that probably could not have been worse fitted for a community of human habitation. It is open to the full sweep of the violent storms and the heavy waves that often beat in from the sea. It has a relatively narrow beach and immediately within is a strip of tundra, frozen solid in winter, but a sea of mud during the open season. In this morass the town grew up. In the early days men and animals floundered through streets that were knee-deep in mud. Later the principal thoroughfares were boarded over. Each summer foolhardy newcomers built structures on the beach only to have them wholly destroyed by the blasts of September when, almost without warning, huge waves sweep to the edge of the tundra and often into the town itself.

Gold was first discovered near Nome in 1898, in one of the numerous creeks that rise in the hills back of the town and cross the tundra to the sea. This discovery was widely heralded through Alaska and the western States. Thousands flocked to the neighborhood in the summer of 1899 and the town was born. That season the remarkable discovery was made that the sand of the beach at the edge of the town was rich in gold, and thousands of prospectors with crude equipment took out respectable fortunes. The beach could not be filed upon but anyone was permitted to dig there. This unique feature of the Nome gold fields drew more than 20,000 people to the region the following summer and the town grew into a thriving city. Placer miners burrowed into the sand like moles for thirty miles or more up and down the beach.

Use of Machinery Reduced Town

By the end of the 1900 season the beach was exhausted of its easily obtainable gold and a large part of the mushroom population turned away from the community permanently. Development of the gold deposits in the creeks back of

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MERELY BECAUSE THERE ARE NO HORSES, JOCKEYS, OR RACE TRACKS IN ALASKA IS NO REASON WHY NOME SHOULD NOT HAVE ITS RACES

In no other part of the world is the rivalry keener than between owner-driven teams of sled dogs in the far north. Women not infrequently enter the lists, as shown in this picture.

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Has Mexico a Skyscraper Pyramid?

A PYRAMID that may rival those of Egypt, for size, and prove to be even older than the Nilesian piles, recently was found at Teotihuacan, Mexico.

Long ago two other pyramids, relics of the Toltec people of pre-Columbian times, were discovered among the volcanic ashes around San Juan Teotihuacan, meaning "City of the Gods," a village about 25 miles northeast of Mexico City.

Excavation of the new pyramid may help to lift the veil which dims our knowledge of these American pyramid-builders, members of a bygone race.

Nearby Cities Buried by Volcanoes

Certain it is that the pyramids of Teotihuacan, which already are widely known, have kept their heads above the vomiting of angry volcanoes for numberless centuries, while it would appear that the cities nearby were without doubt buried in those bygone ages by volcanic eruptions. The Toltecs were by tradition famous mound-builders, and here it seems they mingled with their reverence for the Supreme Being the mythical religion of astral worship. Their earliest temples were devoted to the sun. The moon they worshiped as his wife and the stars as his sisters. No image was allowed within these temples, and their offerings were perfumed flowers and sweet-scented gums.

The projecting stones of "El Sol," the highest pyramid, seen here and there over the pyramid, mark the upward progress of those indefatigable workers until they gained the summit of their ambition. The pyramid was divided into stories by placing a series of truncated pyramids one above the other.

Half as High as Washington Monument

Two hundred and sixty-eight steps must be climbed to reach the summit. The pyramid is 216 feet in height, and has a base about 761 feet square. The summit is 59 by 105 feet square.

Many strange idols have been dug up. Beautiful pieces of jade and obsidian, arrow-heads, little heads of burnt clay, earthen jars of antique form, and others similar to those in use at the present time, were found. One little piece of cloth that was found is carefully guarded in the museum. What was its use? Many skulls, as well as some skeletons, have also been unearthed.

Reaching the summit, one is richly rewarded, for a fine expanse of country lies unfolded to the gaze, with just a peep of the snow-capped volcano Popocatepetl far in the distance, while yonder the little town of San Juan appears sleepily dreaming under the shadow of the pyramids. Turning to the right, one sees not far distant the Pyramid of the Moon (la Luna), smaller than the "Sun Pyramid," but looking very green and attractive, covered yet with its mantle of grass, heavy underbrush and trees.

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Nome continued, however, and the town settled to a permanent population of several thousand, with a municipal government, water-works, electric lights, and other conveniences of civilization. In the years between 1910 and the outbreak of the world war there was a marked development in the use of dredges and other machinery in the exploitation of the creek depths. This lessened the number of miners employed by the large companies and still further restricted the population of Nome though it remained important as a gold field.

With the disturbed conditions arising from the war, Nome has been threatened with economic disaster. The country is still rich in gold but the high cost of operation has brought about the closing of many mining activities.

Nome took its name from Cape Nome nearby, which was named as the result of a misunderstanding. It means nothing unless it can be construed to signify "the nameless." It was discovered in the examination of an early chart that when the physical features of northwestern Alaska were named one cape had been overlooked. The penciled query "name" was made beside it. A copyist transcribed the scrawled question as "Nome" and the name has stuck.

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The Dardanelles: Where Nations Fought for Power and Men Swam for the Hand of a Maid

PROVISION has been made for an international force along the Dardanelles to guarantee free passage to ships of all nations through the Straits and the Sea of Marmora.

Even our own "Mississippi" or "Pennsylvania" some day may rest at anchor in this deep, swift strait, 37 miles in length, between the goose-neck peninsula of Gallipoli and the mainland of Turkey, or steam past into the Sea of Marmora and thence to the Bosphorus for the American jackies to "Oh!" and "Ah!" at the mosques and minarets of Constantinople in the distance.

The Romance of Leander and Hero

Mention of the Dardanelles conjures before the American mind the story of a fierce and interest-compelling fight in 1915 and 1916 and a history which trails back into dim mythological times when Leander swam across its ¾-mile width at Abydos every night to tell the "same old story" to Hero, who hung her light out to inform him she wanted to hear it.

Lord Byron, not to be outdone as a swimmer by his predecessor, "did" the Hellespont in 1810. Though it was regarded as rather a prodigious feat when these two accomplished it, many modern athletes could don their trunks and visit their lady loves and regard the effort as a part of their training to keep physically fit.

Xerxes, in 488 B. C., having an uncanny feeling that his thousands of Persians were not Billingtons and Kellermans, lashed boats together as a bridgeway, which Herodotus tells us groaned for seven days and nights, during the unloading of Asiatics on the soil of Europe. Alexander the Great, about 100 years later, before he was reduced to tears at the failure of the world to provide him excitement, tried out the thrill of Xerxes by leading his Macedonians into Asia.

Approach to Constantinople Likened to Vestibule

The approach by which the American soldier and sailor will enter Constantinople may well be likened to the entrance to a dwelling-house—the Dardanelles being the outside or storm door, the Sea of Marmora the vestibule, and the Bosphorus the inner door.

This storm door, which is about the width of the Hudson River, is commanded by the Dardanelles Castles built by Mohammed II in 1470. One fort is on the European side and one on the Asiatic. Many guide-books published before 1914 carried this ominous and prophetic sentence: "The castles on both sides have been lately restored and armed with Krupp guns." According to the treaty of July, 1841, and the Paris peace of 1856, no foreign ship of war was

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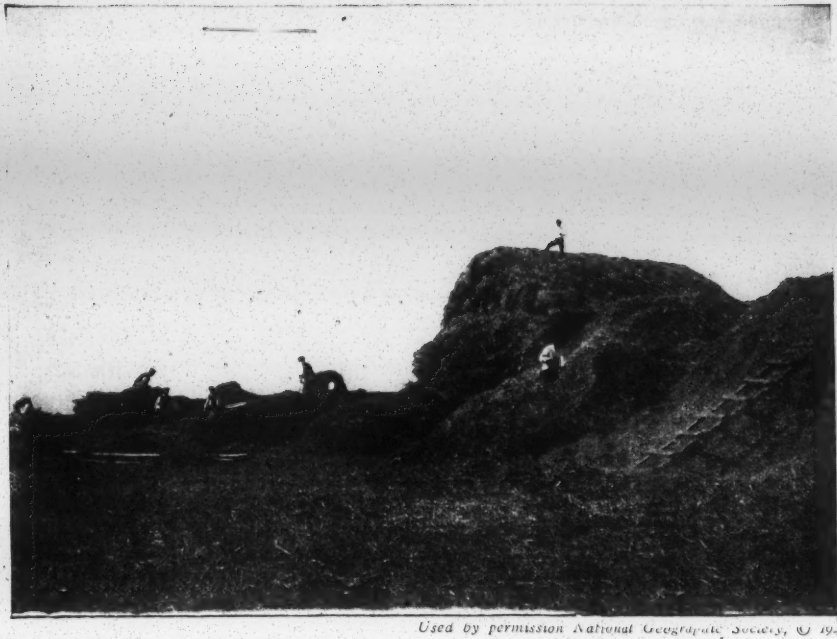

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GREAT STACKS OF STRAW LEFT AFTER THRESHING: UKRAINE

The great wheat-producing Ukraine has stood between Russia and famine on many occasions, but it has not always been able to keep that dread scourge at bay. Sometimes, as in recent years, there has been much grain in the Ukraine while people in other parts of Russia have starved because of a lack of means for hauling the precious bread stuff to the places where it has been most needed.

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Where Pearl Buttons Come From

ONE frequently must follow a long trail to strange places to find the origin of the most common conveniences of our home, wardrobe, or dinner table. For example, pearl buttons are dependent upon preservation of certain Mississippi River fish.

This economic curiosity is explained in a communication to the National Geographic Society by Hugh M. Smith as follows:

"The perpetuation of the fish supply in the Mississippi and its tributaries involves a very important industry besides fishing. Investigations conducted for the Bureau of Fisheries years ago showed an intimate relation between certain kinds of fishes and the mussels, which yield valuable pearls and support a pearl-button industry which gives employment to about 20,000 persons and has a product worth from $5,000,000 to $6,000,000 annually.

Mussels Cannot Survive Without Fishes

"The young mussels, of microscopic size when thrown off by their parents in myriads, need to pass the first few weeks of their independent existence on the gills of fishes. If the fishes are not present at the proper time, the mussels cannot survive. Furthermore—and this is a most interesting feature of the co-relation of fishes and mussels—the young of particular kinds of mussels require the gills of particular kinds of fishes as nurseries.

"The black bass is host for several sorts of mussels, the crappies for several others, the catfishes for others. The skip-jack, a kind of herring, is the only known host for the best of all mussels; and as this fish is not by any means abundant, its maintenance is of prime importance to the welfare of the button industry. In 1919 more than one and a half million skip-jacks were rescued from pools left when flood waters subsided.

Improving Upon Processes of Nature

"The peculiar requirements of the young mussels having been carefully determined, the Bureau of Fisheries has gone extensively into the business of artificial propagation of pearly mussels by a method which is a vast improvement on nature. The spawning mussels, held in ponds, are at the critical period provided with the special fishes needed for the attachment of the young.

"The fishes obtained in the rescue operations are turned into the ponds at the time the mussels are spawning and become thickly inoculated. They are then liberated in the open water and distribute themselves and the mussels throughout a wide stretch of river. Thus two important branches of the bureau's work go hand in hand.

"The artificial propagation of fresh-water mussels is one of the functions

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allowed to enter the strait without the permission of Turkey, and merchant vessels only during the daytime.

On the Asiatic side a short distance from the fort lies the town of Dardanelles, which was named for Dardanus, the mythological ancestor of the Trojan kings, Aeneas, and hence of the Roman people. This city of 15,000 inhabitants, situated prettily on a fertile stretch of land, is the point from which most of the excursionists start for the plains of Troy, a short distance beyond. Here, too, ships must stop to show their papers, the number of merchant vessels alone during a single year numbering more than 12,000.

Across on the European side, is Gallipoli or "beautiful town." It was the first European town to be captured by the Turks in 1357. Superbly located on the steep projecting coast of the Gallipoli Peninsula, it commands a view of the Asiatic side—the plains of Troy and the broken foot-hills of Mount Ida. On this narrow peninsula in April 1915, allied forces were landed in an attempt to capture the Dardanelles. When the floods drove the British soldiers from their trenches like rats out of holes, Turkish snipers on the hills above picked them off almost as fast as they appeared. The campaign was abandoned in January, 1916.

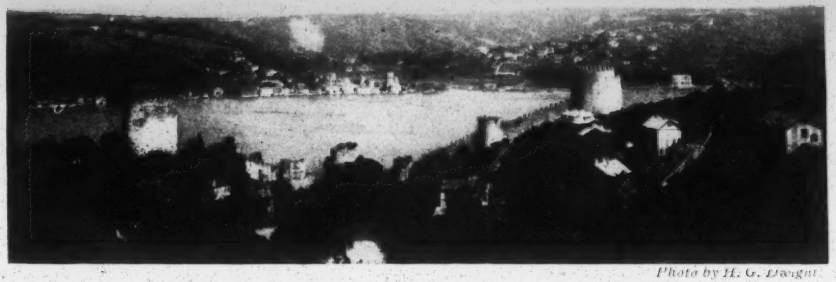

Photo by H. G. Dwight

A VIEW OF THE BOSPHORUS AT THE NARROWEST PART

On the farther shore, in the center, may be discerned the castle built by Bajezid I. The Bosphorus at this point is about 550 yards wide. The current through the straits here is always very swift; in fact, so strong that it is impossible to row against it.

"The Bosphorus never feels the influence of tides. From the vast bosom of the Mediterranean the evaporation is enormous. The contribution of its rivers, moreover, is small in comparison with that of the mighty streams which deluge the Black Sea. So in the Bosphorus the flow southward is constant. The current sometimes attains a velocity of four and even five miles an hour. So violently does it rush by the promontories of Arnaoutkeui and Rumeli Hissar that the strongest boatmen are unable to row against it. This has given rise to a peculiar guild, or craft—the yedekdjis—whose whole business consists in towing vessels up the stream."—Edwin A. Grosvenor.

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Russia: The Heiress of Famines

NEVER, in civilized times, have so many old-world nations felt the pinch of hunger at once; yet suffering from want of food is no new story to many of them. Especially has Russia been the luckless heir to periods of near-starvation.

Writing to the National Geographic Society, Ralph A. Graves tells of Russian famines of the past as follows:

"Next to the proletariat of India and China, the Russian peasant has felt the pinch of poverty and hunger more keenly and more frequently than any other citizen on earth.

Death Toll Was 500,000

"One of the earliest famines in Russia of which there is any definite record was that of 1600, which continued for three years, with a death toll of 500,000 peasants. Cats, dogs and rats were eaten; the strong overcame the weak, and in the shambles of the public markets human flesh was sold. Multitudes of the dead were found with their mouths stuffed with straw.

"Three Russian famines of comparatively recent date were among the most severe in the history of the country. They occurred in 1891, 1906 and 1911. During the ten years following the first of these periods of dearth the government allotted nearly $125,000,000 for relief work, but the sums were not always judiciously expended.

Government Distributed Flour by Rations

"In 1906 the government gave 40 pounds of flour a month to all persons under 18 and over 59 years of age. All peasants between those ages and infants under one year of age received no allowance, and it became necessary for the younger and older members of the family to share their bare pittance with those for whom no provision was made. The suffering was intense and the mortality exceedingly heavy, but the available statistics are not wholly reliable.

"The famine of 1911 extended over one-third of the area of the empire in Europe and affected more or less directly 30,000,000 people, while 8,000,000 were reduced to starvation. Weeds, the bark of trees, and bitter bread made from acorns constituted the chief diet for the destitute. This was unquestionably the most widespread and most severe famine that had befallen a European nation until the period following the World War."

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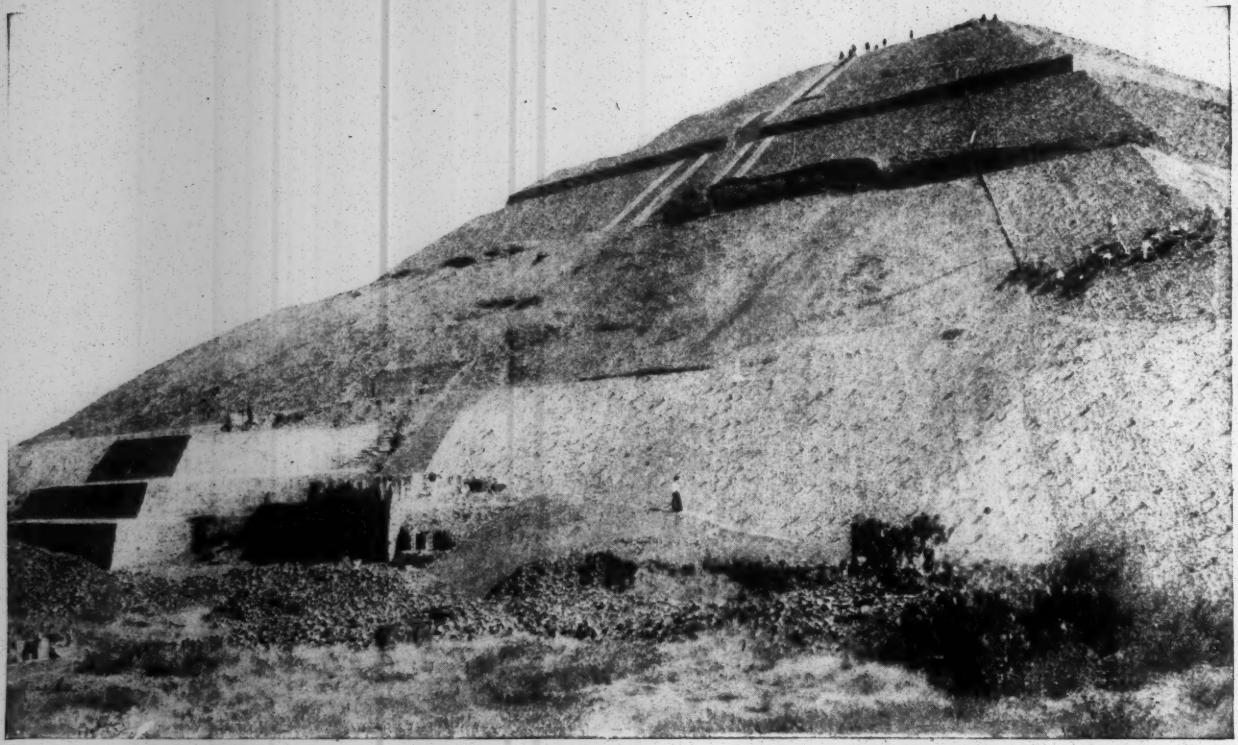
of a government biological laboratory located on the Mississippi River. Each year from 200,000,000 to 300,000,000 young mussels are thus brought in contact with the gills of rescued fishes and given a proper start in life. The maintenance of the mussel supply is thus being greatly aided.

"That this work is not a mere experiment, but is yielding practical results, is shown by various pieces of evidence. For instance, pearl buttons have been made from Mississippi River mussels grown from larvae that had been artificially implanted on the gills of a black bass less than two years before and had been under constant observation. These mussels would have attained full commercial size at the age of four and a half years."



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THE MOST COLOSSAL STRUCTURE OF PREHISTORIC MAN IN AMERICA: THE PYRAMID OF THE SUN (RESTORED): TEOTIHUACAN, MEXICO

In the magnitude of its remains and in the evidence the site furnishes of population and antiquity, Teotihuacan stands easily at the head of the ancient cities of Mexico. It lacks the well-preserved, sculpture-decorated buildings found elsewhere in Mexico and Central America, but this is doubtless due to the rarity of suitable building stone in this part of the valley. The famous structures of Mitla, Palenque, Uxmal, and Chichen-Itza, had they been built of such materials as are here available, would today be mere rounded heaps of debris.